MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Corruption cases against officials of CIL

*624. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of corruption/fraud cases pending for investigation and enquiry against the officers and officials of the Coal India Ltd. and its subsidiary companies for the last three years, year-wise;

(b) in how many cases suspension orders have been issued and what are the nature and amount involved in each case; and

(c) what action is being taken for the speedy enquiry and disposal of these cases?

THE MINISTER OF POWER AND MINISTER OF MINES AND MINERALS (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) The number of corruption and fraud cases pending investigation and inquiry against the employees of Coal India Limited (CIL) and its subsidiary companies during the last three years is as follows:—

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Cases pending investigation	3	17	68
Cases pending inquiry	14	19	44

During the period of three years from 1997-98 to 1999-2000, 599 cases were taken up for investigation and after investigation, 202 cases were taken up for departmental inquiry as per the latest information available with the Department of Coal. After the completion of the inquiries, penalties were awarded in 80 cases. The officials penalised included several General Managers and two Directors of CIL subsidiaries. In addition, as a result of vigilance investigation more than Rs. 1 lakh was recovered from the Chairman-cum-Managing Director of a subsidiary company of CIL.

(b) 21 suspension orders have been issued in CIL and its subsidiary companies during the last three years in various cases of possession of disproportionate assets, illegal appointments under the land losers' scheme, illegal gratification, irregular lifting of coal and irregularities in tendering and purchases. Out of the 21 cases of suspension, the amount involved that could be quantified in 15 cases was Rs. 11,26,982/-.

(c) The investigation cases and the departmental inquiries are regularly monitored by the Chief Vigilance Officers (CVOs) of the subsidiary companies of CIL as well as in the CIL headquarters. Monthly reports are sent by the subsidiary companies of CIL to the CVO, CIL. The matters are reported every quarter to the Department of Coal as well as to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC). In addition, the pending departmental inquiries are reviewed every month by the Chairmen-cum-Managing Directors of the respective subsidiary companies of CIL and the pendency position is also put up to the Boards of Directors regularly. Moreover, at the level of Chairman, CIL all pending departmental inquiries are reviewed every six months. The Department of Coal and the CVC also undertake periodic reviews of the pending investigations and inquiries.

In order to maintain independence and objectivity in vigilance investigation, all the CVOs of the CIL and its subsidiaries are taken on deputation from the Central Government services from outside the coal industry.

Acceptance of Sarkaria Commission Recommendations

*626. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Standing Committee of Inter State Council decided on 4th April, 2000, to accept several recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations;

(b) if so, which of the recommendations were accepted and which ones were rejected or left undecided;

(c) whether no consensus was arrived at with regard to the recommendation on operation of Article 356; and

(d) what steps have since been taken to bring about a consensus on the use of this Article?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) The Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council, in its meeting held on 4th April, 2000, considered certain recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission relating to "Administrative Relations', "Reservation of Bills', "Financial Relations', "Industries', "Agriculture', "Food and Civil Supplies' and "Trade, Commerce and Inter-Course within the Territory of India'. The recommendations of the Standing Committee in this regard will be considered by the Inter-State Council. The next meeting of the Inter-State Council is due to held on 20th May, 2000.